for U.S. assistance to Ukraine given the strategic relationship and shared value between our two countries.

Russia remains a significant threat to its neighbors and to the U.S. Bolstering our partners in Eastern Europe is one key way to check Russia's increasing adventurism.

Looking ahead, we must stay focused on this threat and continue to focus on our national security programs at home. We cannot simply allow ourselves to get lulled into a false sense of security simply because of lack of information about specific threats against soft targets like stadiums and airports.

Since 9/11, we have made significant and important enhancements to U.S. intelligence capabilities, but that was 15 years ago. We must continuously reassess our risks and take appropriate steps to stop terrorist attacks before they occur.

Mr. NUNES. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In closing, to describe the world as dangerous is not an overstatement or a political statement—it is a reality.

Thankfully, we have the world's most talented, capable, and committed intelligence community to warn and defend us. From leaders like Director Clapper, who has served this Nation exceptionally for more than 5 decades, to those men and women just beginning their careers in intelligence; from case officers to analysts; support and logistics personnel to inspectors general; from acquisition professionals to lawyers; seismologists to cryptologists; from mathematicians to linguists; particle physicists to special forces; to all in the IC: You have our most sincere thanks and admiration.

I again thank Chairman NUNES, for his leadership, his hard work, and his commitment to bipartisanship.

To my majority and minority colleagues, I thank you for your unwavering commitment to conduct rigorous and continuous oversight of the IC that helps protect our country as well as our privacy and civil liberties.

And I thank our excellent committee staff, including on the Democratic side, Carly Blake, Linda Cohen, Bob Minehart, Amanda Rogers Thorpe, Wells Bennett, Rheanne Wirkkala, Thomas Eager, as well as our shared staff, Kristin Jepson, Brandon Smith, and Kevin Klein. I also want to thank my staff director, Michael Bahar, deputy staff director, Tim Bergreen, and Patrick Boland.

I urge my colleagues to support this critically important bipartisan bill, and I look forward to improving it further on its way to becoming law.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. NUNES. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In closing, I want to thank all of the members of our committee, and, again, thank the staff from both the minority and the majority side.

As Mr. QUIGLEY said, it would not be possible if it wasn't for the strong Member involvement and engagement that makes a bipartisan work product like this, gives it the ability to come to the House floor, and to be passed overwhelmingly on a bipartisan basis. So I want to thank all of the members on my committee from both sides for their active participation. As the ranking member said, we will continue to try to make this product better; we will work out our differences with the Senate; and hopefully by the end of the year, we will have a product that we can all be proud of.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. NUNES) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5077, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

☐ 1545

S.A.F.E. MORTGAGE LICENSING ACT OF 2008 AMENDMENT

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2121) to amend the S.A.F.E. Mortgage Licensing Act of 2008 to provide a temporary license for loan originators transitioning between employers, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2121

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. ELIMINATING BARRIERS TO JOBS FOR LOAN ORIGINATORS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The S.A.F.E. Mortgage Licensing Act of 2008 (12 U.S.C. 5101 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 1518. EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION OF LOAN ORIGINATORS.

"(a) TEMPORARY AUTHORITY TO ORIGINATE LOANS FOR LOAN ORIGINATORS MOVING FROM A DEPOSITORY INSTITUTION TO A NON-DEPOSITORY INSTITUTION.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Upon employment by a State-licensed mortgage company, an individual who is a registered loan originator shall be deemed to have temporary authority to act as a loan originator in an application State for the period described in paragraph (2) if the individual—

"(A) has not had an application for a loan originator license denied, or had such a license revoked or suspended in any governmental jurisdiction;

"(B) has not been subject to or served with a cease and desist order in any governmental jurisdiction or as described in section 1514(c);

"(C) has not been convicted of a felony that would preclude licensure under the law of the application State;

"(D) has submitted an application to be a State-licensed loan originator in the application State; and

"(E) was registered in the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry as a loan originator during the 12-month period preceding the date of submission of the information required under section 1505(a).

"(2) PERIOD.—The period described in paragraph (1) shall begin on the date that the individual submits the information required under section 1505(a) and shall end on the earliest of—

"(A) the date that the individual withdraws the application to be a State-licensed loan originator in the application State;

"(B) the date that the application State denies, or issues a notice of intent to deny, the application;

"(C) the date that the application State grants a State license; or

"(D) the date that is 120 days after the date on which the individual submits the application, if the application is listed on the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry as incomplete.

"(b) TEMPORARY AUTHORITY TO ORIGINATE LOANS FOR STATE-LICENSED LOAN ORIGINATORS MOVING INTERSTATE.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—A State-licensed loan originator shall be deemed to have temporary authority to act as a loan originator in an application State for the period described in paragraph (2) if the State-licensed loan originator—

"(A) meets the requirements of subparagraphs (A), (B), (C), and (D) of subsection (a)(1);

"(B) is employed by a State-licensed mortgage company in the application State; and

"(C) was licensed in a State that is not the application State during the 30-day period preceding the date of submission of the information required under section 1505(a) in connection with the application submitted to the application State.

"(2) PERIOD.—The period described in paragraph (1) shall begin on the date that the State-licensed loan originator submits the information required under section 1505(a) in connection with the application submitted to the application State and end on the earliest of—

"(A) the date that the State-licensed loan originator withdraws the application to be a State-licensed loan originator in the application State;

"(B) the date that the application State denies, or issues a notice of intent to deny, the application;

"(C) the date that the application State grants a State license; or

"(D) the date that is 120 days after the date on which the State-licensed loan originator submits the application, if the application is listed on the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry as incomplete.

"(c) APPLICABILITY.—

"(1) Any person employing an individual who is deemed to have temporary authority to act as a loan originator in an application State pursuant to this section shall be subject to the requirements of this title and to applicable State law to the same extent as if such individual was a State-licensed loan originator licensed by the application State.

"(2) Any individual who is deemed to have temporary authority to act as a loan originator in an application State pursuant to this section and who engages in residential mortgage loan origination activities shall be subject to the requirements of this title and to applicable State law to the same extent as if such individual was a State-licensed loan originator licensed by the application State.

"(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the following definitions shall apply:

"(1) STATE-LICENSED MORTGAGE COMPANY.—The term 'State-licensed mortgage company' means an entity licensed or registered under the law of any State to engage in residential mortgage loan origination and processing activities.

''(2) APPLICATION STATE.—The term 'application State' means a State in which a registered loan originator or a State-licensed loan originator seeks to be licensed.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 (42 U.S.C. 4501 note) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1517 the following:

''Sec. 1518. Employment transition of loan originators.''.

SEC. 2. AMENDMENT TO CIVIL LIABILITY OF THE BUREAU AND OTHER OFFICIALS.

Section 1513 of the S.A.F.E. Mortgage Licensing Act of 2008 (12 U.S.C. 5112) is amended by striking ''are loan originators or are applying for licensing or registration as loan originators'' and inserting ''are applying for licensing or registration using the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry''.

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect on the date that is 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LUETKEMEYER) and the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 2121, the S.A.F.E. Transitional Licensing Act of 2015, introduced by the gentleman from Ohio. (Mr. STIVERS).

H.R. 2121 would establish that a mortgage loan originator who is employed by a federally insured depository institution and who leaves to join a State-licensed mortgage company would have temporary authority to originate mortgages. The bill stipulates that, in order to qualify for this transitional license, the individual must have filed an application with the State to be a licensed loan originator.

More simply, this bill allows flexibility to workers who are looking to make a career change. This bill does not allow for unregulated, unlicensed mortgage originators to have a free pass.

The S.A.F.E. Transitional Licensing Act makes clear that the temporary license—good for a maximum of 120 days—can apply only to a registered loan originator.

Further, H.R. 2121 stipulates that the originator must be registered with the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System, or NMLS, and be employed by a licensed and supervised mortgage lender, banker, or servicer.

H.R. 2121 includes other safeguards that are important to point out. The bill makes clear that the temporary authority would automatically expire should the originator withdraw his or her application or if the State denies the application.

This is a highly bipartisan bill that will ensure workers who originate mortgages at depository institutions are able to move to non-depository institutions with a minimal amount of work disruption.

At the end of the day, this bill is about jobs. It is about streamlining the government processes to make sure that people can continue to put food on the table. Folks shouldn't be prevented from working for months at a time simply because they want to change jobs or employers. Our regulatory structure should foster not only consumer protection, but job growth and efficient marketplaces. The current licensing requirements do the exact opposite.

I thank the gentleman from Ohio for his hard work on this legislation. I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this commonsense, employee-friendly bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 2121, the S.A.F.E. Transitional Licensing Act of 2015.

I am proud to serve as an original Democratic cosponsor of this commonsense, yet critically important, legislation. I also applaud my colleagues, led by Representative STIVERS, for working in a bipartisan way to draft this legislation that we are considering here today.

Homeownership continues to be and remains a dream for millions of Americans across the country. This legislation is an important step towards helping to ensure that this dream becomes a reality. H.R. 2121 helps to facilitate a loan originator's job mobility while ensuring that State regulators continue to have the ability to protect consumers and the marketplace.

This legislation offers a narrowly tailored and pragmatic solution that provides a transitional authority to originate mortgages for individuals who move from a federally insured institution to a nonbank lender. During this transition, these individuals will also work to meet the S.A.F.E. Act's licensing and testing requirements.

Over the past several years, State regulators, key industry stakeholders, and Members of Congress have been engaged in an extensive dialogue on ways to eliminate job barriers for loan originators as well as to help to promote homeownership for qualified buyers.

I am committed to continuing to ensure that our housing finance and mortgage system continues to deliver fair, sustainable, and responsible financing to meet the ever-changing needs of homeownership.

H.R. 2121 is truly a reflection of what can be achieved when we all work together towards a unified and shared goal. I urge my colleagues to support this critically important piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS), a distinguished member of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time, and I thank him for all of the work that he has done as the chair of the subcommittee.

It is work that is making a difference as it allows people to get access to their own versions of the American Dream. This is a piece of that, as the Representative told you. I thank Representative SEWELL and Representative BEATTY for all of their hard work.

Mr. Speaker, this is a bipartisan bill. This is a commonsense bill. This is a jobs bill. This was a unanimous bill in the Financial Services Committee. It passed 56–0 on March 2, and I am so proud of that.

The S.A.F.E. Act passed in 2008 as part of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act, and it created two different sets of requirements for qualifications on mortgage loan originators, depending on whether they worked for a State-licensed nondepository or a federally regulated depository.

The problem with that is it kept people captive working for the same kind of company that they worked for yesterday. If they try to change between the two, they don't have a license and they can't help people achieve their versions of the American Dream, of owning a home.

This will allow people to be more mobile in moving between depository and nondepository institutions. It is a jobs issue for that very reason. It will help make sure that the workforce can go where the jobs are and that they can help people get loans to own a home. We all believe in homeownership, and this is a small way we can be for it today.

Representatives SEWELL and BEATTY worked very hard with me with industry stakeholders and with State regulators in getting the bill that we have today, which, as I said, passed unanimously out of the Financial Services Committee.

H.R. 2121, as amended, would foster an efficient marketplace of competition between banks and nonbanks and allow mortgage loan originators to help all Americans achieve homeownership. It would provide them with a transitional authority if you move from a depository to a nondepository or the other way around.

Under the proposal, an individual who is employed by a financial institution that has been a registered loan originator under the S.A.F.E. Act for the preceding 12 months can originate loans after submitting a background check and credit information to his

State regulator until the application is either approved, denied, withdrawn, or even if it is just deemed incomplete.

At that point, the transitional authority ceases, so he has to submit a full application. Once he does that, he gets a chance to continue to work under this transitional period.

Again, this is a jobs issue. It will help people move between the two types of institutions, which most Americans don't think about. They just want to make sure they get a mortgage. That is what we need to make sure we facilitate here with commonsense rules.

Sadly, some States have had transitional license authority, but the CFPB does not allow them now to exercise that authority. That is why this bill is necessary. I am really glad that we can allow for that now to make sure that all Americans can get access to homeownership.

I thank Representative SEWELL, Representative BEATTY, all of the members of the House Financial Services Committee, the gentleman from Missouri for his leadership, the gentleman from Texas—the chair of the full committee—for his leadership, and the ranking member of the committee, the gentlewoman from California.

This is indeed a unanimous bill. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, again, I thank the sponsor of the bill, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS), as well as Ms. SEWELL and Mrs. BEATTY from the other side for their fine work and their support. I appreciate all of the work that was done.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express support for the SAFE Transitional Licensing Act, H.R. 2121 introduced by my good friend from Ohio, Mr. STIVERS. This bipartisan bill provides much needed, common-sense regulatory relief for mortgage loan originators that levels the playing field, creates job mobility and allows independent mortgage lenders to recruit a talented workforce.

The SAFE Transitional Licensing Act requires states to provide a temporary, transitional license for registered loan originators that move from a financial institution to a state-licensed non-bank originator or move interstate to a state-licensed loan originator. These individuals will be allowed to continue to work and originate loans in their new capacity for up to 120 days, while seeking the appropriate state licenses. This bill addresses the unintended consequences of some of the provisions in the Secure and Fair Enforcement for Mortgage Licensing Act of 2008, which created difficulties when a mortgage loan officer decided to switch jobs from a bank to a nonbank lender, or when a mortgage loan officer decided to move across state lines.

Under current law, mortgage loan originators are required to wait until they receive their new licenses before they can originate loans. Often times, mortgage loan originators are forced to wait weeks, even months, before their new licenses are approved. This unfairly inhibits job mobility for mortgage loan originators and puts independent mortgage lenders at a disadvantage in recruiting talented staff.

The SAFE Transitional Licensing Act amends the SAFE Mortgage Licensing Act to give relief to loan officers, while also allowing state regulators the authority to continue to keep bad actors out of the industry and enforce applicable state laws.

The State of Ohio was the first state to enact a transitional license for out-of-state licensed mortgage loan originators. Now, it is time for Congress to follow Ohio's lead and provide regulatory relief that levels the playing field, creates job mobility and allows independent mortgage lenders to recruit a talented workforce. I urge my colleagues to vote "Yes" for this common-sense piece of legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LUETKEMEYER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2121, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FOSTERING INNOVATION ACT OF 2015

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4139) to amend the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 to provide a temporary exemption for low-revenue issuers from certain auditor attestation requirements.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4139

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Fostering Innovation Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. TEMPORARY EXEMPTION FOR LOW-REVENUE ISSUERS.

Section 404 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (15 U.S.C. 7262) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(d) TEMPORARY EXEMPTION FOR LOW-REVENUE ISSUERS.—

''(1) LOW-REVENUE EXEMPTION.—Subsection (b) shall not apply with respect to an audit report prepared for an issuer that—

''(A) ceased to be an emerging growth company on the last day of the fiscal year of the issuer following the fifth anniversary of the date of the first sale of common equity securities of the issuer pursuant to an effective registration statement under the Securities Act of 1933;

''(B) had average annual gross revenues of less than $50,000,000 as of its most recently completed fiscal year; and

''(C) is not a large accelerated filer.

''(2) EXPIRATION OF TEMPORARY EXEMPTION.—An issuer ceases to be eligible for the exemption described under paragraph (1) at the earliest of—

''(A) the last day of the fiscal year of the issuer following the tenth anniversary of the date of the first sale of common equity securities of the issuer pursuant to an effective registration statement under the Securities Act of 1933;

''(B) the last day of the fiscal year of the issuer during which the average annual gross revenues of the issuer exceed $50,000,000; or

''(C) the date on which the issuer becomes a large accelerated filer.

''(3) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subsection:

''(A) AVERAGE ANNUAL GROSS REVENUES.—The term 'average annual gross revenues' means the total gross revenues of an issuer over its most recently completed three fiscal years divided by three.

''(B) EMERGING GROWTH COMPANY.—The term 'emerging growth company' has the meaning given such term under section 3 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78c).

''(C) LARGE ACCELERATED FILER.—The term 'large accelerated filer' has the meaning given that term under section 240.12b–2 of title 17, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor thereto.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LUETKEMEYER) and the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 4139, the Fostering Innovation Act, introduced by the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK).

H.R. 4139 extends a narrow exemption to comply with section 404(b) of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act for emerging growth companies that would otherwise lose their exempt status at the end of a 5-year period allowed under current law.

As such, H.R. 4139 is consistent with the bipartisan aims of the JOBS Act to eliminate the one-size-fits-all regulatory structure for public companies.

Under Sarbanes-Oxley, or SOX, section 404(b) requires an independent and external assessment of a public company's internal controls over financial reporting.

While important, this translates into significant legal and compliance costs, driving up an entity's accounting and auditing expenses. In fact, the costs to comply with section 404(b) have far exceeded the original estimates done by the SEC, and even a 2011 SEC study found that the average costs for companies can exceed $1 million annually.

This burden disproportionately impacts small and emerging growth companies, such as biotech firms that are engaging in lifesaving research and development. My home State of Missouri alone has over 1,300 biotech companies that employ over 28,000 people who conduct groundbreaking research.

Section 404(b)'s costs divert the resources of emerging growth companies to regulatory compliance costs, which